

These Soviets are real thing

The names Salman Hashimikov and Victor Zangiev are sure to become the answer to a future pro wrestling trivia question: Who were the first legitimate Soviet athletes to work in the United States as professional wrestlers since the onset of the Cold War?



**GRUNT
AND
GRIN**

BY DAVE MELTZER
FOR THE NATIONAL

The practice of using bogus Russians — generally with shaved heads and names like Ivan, Nikita, Nikolai and Boris — as wrestling villains dates back to well before the days of Gorgeous George. **Ivan Koloff (originally from Quebec)** and Professor Boris Malenko (who hailed from New Jersey) were among the most hated wrestlers of their era. But in recent years, with detente and all, Soviet villains seem to have run their course. In recent years, Nikita Koloff (from Minnesota) and Nikolai Volkoff (who was originally from Yugoslavia but came to the U.S. in the 1960s) have wrestled for the National Wrestling Alliance and World Wrestling Federation as good guys.

Hashimikov and Zangiev, neither of whom shaves his head (although Zangiev is balding) wrestle Sunday on the NWA's "Starrcade '90" pay-per-view show from Kiel Auditorium in St. Louis, as part of the Pat O'Connor Memorial International tag team tournament. The Soviets will take on Canada's Troy Montour and Danny Johnson in the first round of the eight-team, single-elimination event. Hashimikov, 37, won five Greco-Roman world championships between 1978 and 1983. Zangiev, 32, captured three freestyle world titles in the early 1980s.



Paul E. Dangerously

EC: Headlining Starrcade will be **Sting**, defending the NWA title against **The Black Scorpion** in a cage match. If Scorpion fails to win the title, he will unmask. . . . **Ultimate Warrior** defends the WWF title against **Sgt. Slaughter** on the promotion's pay-per-view show, "The Royal Rumble," on Jan. 19 in Miami. . . . **Tom (Z-Man) Zenk** won the NWA television title from **Arn Anderson** on Dec. 4 in

Atlanta. . . . **The Nasty Boys** start with the WWF at tonight's television taping in West Palm Beach, Fla. . . . **Lawrence Taylor** of the New York Giants will be part of the NWA show on Jan. 11 at the Meadowlands in East Rutherford, N.J. Taylor will second **Lex Luger** in a "football match" against **The Big Cat**, managed by **Paul E. Dangerously**. Both wrestlers will wear football gear and the object is to knock the opponent out of the ring using football technique. Luger was an offensive lineman at the University of Miami and later played in the USFL. Big Cat (**Curtis Hughes**) played college football at Kansas State. . . . On Dec. 26 in Japan, **Lou Thesz**, 74, will become the first man to wrestle professionally in seven different decades.

The Grunt and Grin column appears every Tuesday.

Chad

12/11/90